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May 1, 2012

Selectmen, Town of Lamoine
606 Douglas Highway
Lamoine, ME 04605

Dear Selectmen:

I am aware that the information regarding withdrawal from RSU 24 that is provided on the Bulletin Board of the Town's website is prepared primarily by individuals who have already established an opinion on the issue and not by the selectmen. However, I would like to point out that among the many clever misrepresentations and statements of opinion as fact, there is a particularly inflammatory misstatement of fact that, I believe, requires a formal correction.

Number 6 on page 2 states, "Under the RSU, the Lamoine School has *lost portions of staff positions* (classroom teacher, principal, Physical Education, Music, Library, Nurse and has gained some staff positions (Guidance). (See Table)" The table referred to depicts staffing at the school during the 2006-07 school year vs. the 2012-13 school year (which is curious as it has not come yet) and aptly demonstrates the aforementioned loss of positions.

In fact, most of these positions were reduced by the good citizens of Lamoine in 2007-08 and 2008-09 as they struggled to keep taxation under control in the face of rising operating costs and decreasing state aid **prior to formation of the RSU**. The library position was reduced from .6 FTE (Full-Time Equivalency) to .4 FTE in 2007-08 and then to .2 FTE in 2008-09. The reduction in the Principal position to .67 FTE and the reduction of the Physical Education and Music positions from full-time to .6 FTE all occurred in the contentious budget deliberation process preceding the 2008-09 school year. There have been not further cuts in those positions by the RSU as is stated on the website. Two classroom teachers have sought other employment within the RSU, whether it was for job security or economic gain is a matter of speculation. People seek new jobs for all kinds of reasons. One of those positions was replaced by another outstanding teacher from elsewhere within the RSU. The other position was not filled due to declining enrollment at the school. But the Principal position was restored to a full-time position with some teaching responsibilities. And, as acknowledged on the website, a Guidance position has been added by the RSU.

I think what bothers me the most is the cynical attempt to back up this statement with an "authoritative" graph that compares the present with 2006-07, and not 2008-09, the last year before the RSU was formed. It seems to me that this was presented that way in a deliberate attempt to deceive and mislead the public...something that is evident throughout the "information" that is provided on this website. It is no wonder that people are confused about this whole issue...apparently that is the intent.

I believe that it is reasonable to request that the information be removed from the website until it can be presented in a way that is balanced so that all voters can make a decision predicated on facts. I would also hope that you would consider placing this information on the website to create some semblance of balance. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David L. Bridgham", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David L. Bridgham
Business Manager

BUDGETED FTE'S - LAMOINE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL

	Lamoine School Department					Regional School Unit #24				
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09		2009-10	2010-11	2011-012	2012-013
Principal	1	1	1	1	0.67		0.67	0.7	0.7	0.7
Classroom Teachers	9	9	9	9	9		9	8.3	8.3	8.3
Guidance	0.4	0	0	0	0		0	0.2	0.2	0.2
Library	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.2		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Art	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4		0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Music	1	1	1	1	0.6		0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Phys. Ed.	0.5	1	1	1	0.6		0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6